

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS REPORT

Prospective Plantings for 2005
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February Livestock Slaughter
Average Prices Received by Farmers

Louisiana Prospective Plantings For 2005

Louisiana's 2005 cotton planted acreage is expected to be up 24 percent from last year, based on the March 1 intentions survey. Planting intentions for rice, sorghum and sweet potatoes are also up from 2004, and harvested acreage of hay is expected to increase.

These intentions reflect the economic and weather conditions as of March 1. Actual acreage planted may increase or decrease based on conditions for the rest of the planting season. A June 1 survey will be conducted, and planted acreage updates will be released from that survey on June 30, 2005.

Cotton growers intend to plant 620,000 acres, up 120,000 acres, or 24 percent, from a year ago.

Soybean planted acreage is expected to decrease 23 percent from last year, to 850,000 acres. Additional questions on Asian Soybean Rust were asked during the March survey. Eight percent of Louisiana's soybean producers reported that Asian Soybean Rust was a decision making factor in their soybean planting intentions for 2005; 75 percent of these producers reported that their planting intentions decreased due to rust.

Rice planted acreage is expected to increase to 550,000 acres, 2 percent more than last year. The breakout for planted acres is 540,000 acres of long grain rice and 10,000 acres of medium grain.

Corn planted acreage is expected to total 390,000 acres, down 7 percent from a year ago.

Grain sorghum intentions indicate acreage will total 100,000, up 15,000 acres from a year ago.

Sweet potato planted acreage, at 17,000 acres, is up 6 percent from a year ago.

Winter wheat seeded last fall is estimated at 130,000 acres, down 50,000 acres from 2004.

An estimated 400,000 acres of hay will be harvested, up 8 percent from last year.

An estimate of sugarcane acreage for harvest will be available on June 30, 2005.

United States Prospective Plantings

Upland Cotton plantings for 2005 are expected to total 13.5 million acres, up 1 percent from last year. Producers in Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Kansas and Texas intend to decrease acreage from last year. Growers in all other cotton producing states intend to increase planted acreage. American-Pima cotton growers intend to increase their plantings by 10 percent from 2004, to 275,000 acres.

Soybean producers intend to plant 73.9 million acres in 2005, down 2 percent from last year's record high acreage. Of the 31 soybean producing states, growers in 16 states intend to plant fewer acres this year, while producers in 11 states intend to plant more acres than in 2004. The largest acreage declines are in the Dakotas, where low soybean prices have some farmers shifting to other crops.

Rice area intended in 2005 is estimated at 3.36 million acres, up less than 1 percent from 2004 and up 11 percent from 2003. Growers in California and Texas intend to plant fewer acres compared with last year, while the remaining producing states expect an increase in acreage from 2004.

Corn planted for all purposes is estimated at 81.4 million acres in 2005, up 1 percent from 2004 and 4 percent above 2003. If realized, this would be the largest corn acreage since 1985. Expected acreage is up from last year throughout much of the Corn Belt and southern Great Plains.

Sorghum planted for all purposes is estimated at 7.40 million acres in 2005, down 1 percent from last year. Sorghum acres declined from last year in seven states but increased in ten states.

Sweet Potatoes growers intend to plant 94,900 acres of sweet potatoes in 2005, down 3 percent from last year and 1 percent below 2003. This intended decrease in planted acreage is being influenced by high storage inventories.

All wheat planted area is expected to total 58.6 million acres in 2005, down 2 percent from 2004. If realized, this would be the lowest planted acreage since 1972. Winter wheat planted area for the 2005 crop is 41.6 million acres, down 4 percent from 2004.

Hay producers expect to harvest 62.9 million acres of all hay in 2005, up 2 percent from last year. The two states with the largest expected increases are New York, up 470,000 acres from last year, and South Dakota, up 300,000 acres.

Prospective Plantings: Louisiana and United States, March 1, 2005, with 2004 Comparisons

Crop	Louisiana			United States		
	2004	2005	% Change	2004	2005	% Change
	----- Thousand Acres -----			----- Thousand Acres -----		
Corn	420	390	-7	80,930	81,413	+1
Upland Cotton	500	620	+24	13,409	13,540	+1
Rice	538	550	+2	3,347	3,358	---
Sorghum	85	100	+18	7,486	7,400	-1
Soybeans	1,100	850	-23	75,208	73,910	-2
Sweet potatoes	16	17	+6	97.4	94.9	-3
All Wheat	180	130	-28	59,674	58,592	-2
Hay ¹	370	400	+8	61,916	62,940	+2

¹Harvesting intentions.

Louisiana Livestock Slaughter

Commercial red meat production in Louisiana during February totaled 1.1 million pounds, up 10 percent from January but 15 percent below the previous year.

There were 1,100 head of **cattle** slaughtered during February, unchanged from January but 200 head below the previous year. Average live weight was 911 pounds, up 10 pounds from the previous month and 29 pounds above February 2004. Total live weight, at 993,000 pounds, was 5 percent above the previous month but 15 percent below the previous year.

Calves slaughtered during February totaled 500 head, down 100 head from January and the same as the previous year. Live weight averaged 512 pounds, up 37 pounds from January and 9 pounds above a year ago. Total live weight, at 255,000 pounds, was down 14 percent from January but 2 percent above the previous year.

The number of **hogs** slaughtered during February totaled 2,000 head, up 300 head from the previous month but 200 head below February 2004. Average live weight was 209 pounds, up 19 pounds from January but 13 pounds below the previous year. Total live weight was 420,000 pounds, 29 percent above January but 16 percent below a year ago.

The number of **sheep** slaughtered during February was 300 head, up 200 head from January but unchanged from the previous year. Live weight averaged 125 pounds, up 40 pounds from the previous month and 6 pounds above the previous year.

United States Livestock Slaughter

Commercial red meat production for the United States totaled 3.42 billion pounds in February, up 1 percent from the 3.40 billion pounds produced in February 2004.

February 2005 contained 20 weekdays (including one holiday) and 4 Saturdays. February 2004 contained 20 weekdays (including one holiday) and 4 Saturdays.

Beef production, at 1.77 billion pounds, was 2 percent below the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.34 million head, down 4 percent from February 2004. The average live weight was up 21 pounds from the previous year, at 1,254 pounds.

Veal production totaled 12.1 million pounds, 16 percent below February a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 61,900 head, down 13 percent from February 2004. The average live weight was 8 pounds below last year, at 328 pounds.

Pork production totaled 1.63 billion pounds, up 4 percent from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 8.10 million head, 3 percent above February 2004. The average live weight was 2 pound above the previous year, at 270 pounds.

Lamb and mutton production, at 15.2 million pounds, was up 3 percent from February 2004. Sheep slaughter totaled 215,000 head, 1 percent above last year. The average live weight was 140 pounds, up 1 pound from February a year ago.

January to February 2005 commercial red meat production was 7.1 billion pounds, down 1 percent from 2004. Accumulated beef production was down 1 percent from last year; veal was down 17 percent; pork was up slightly from last year, and lamb and mutton production was down 2 percent.

Commercial Livestock Slaughter and Red Meat Production

Item	Louisiana					United States			
	January	February		January – February		February		January – February	
	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005
	----- Number, thousand head -----					----- Number, thousand head -----			
Cattle	1.1	1.3	1.1	2.6	2.2	2,429.2	2,341.2	5,007.8	4,868.9
Calves	0.6	0.5	0.5	1.1	1.1	71.5	61.9	150.5	129.6
Hogs	1.7	2.2	2.0	4.1	3.7	7,887.4	8,103.8	16,678.4	16,581.9
Sheep & Lambs	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	212.5	215.0	432.5	423.5
	----- Total live weight, thousand pounds -----					----- Total live weight, thousand pounds -----			
Cattle	948	1,175	993	2,306	1,941	2,993,963	2,936,554	6,212,651	6,126,083
Calves	295	249	255	539	550	24,011	20,291	50,552	42,576
Hogs	325	499	420	879	745	2,112,505	2,187,417	4,476,168	4,475,531
Sheep & Lambs	9	35	36	43	45	29,601	30,125	60,434	58,883
	----- Average live weight, pounds -----					----- Average live weight, pounds -----			
Cattle	901	882	911	887	882	1,233	1,254	1,241	1,259
Calves	475	503	512	490	500	336	328	336	329
Hogs	190	222	209	214	201	268	270	268	270
Sheep & Lambs	85	119	125	108	113	139	140	140	139
	----- Million pounds -----					----- Million pounds -----			
Red Meat	1.0	1.3	1.1	2.5	2.1	3,404.8	3,423.0	7,118.8	7,071.5

Louisiana Grain Stocks

Corn stocks stored off-farm on March 1, 2005, at 16.3 million bushels, were up 13 percent from last year's 14.5 million bushels.

Sorghum stocks stored off-farm on March 1, 2005, at 1.57 million bushels, were down 2 percent from last year's 1.60 million bushels.

Soybean stocks stored off-farm on March 1, 2005, at 4.23 million bushels, were up 19 percent from last year's 3.56 million bushels.

All wheat stocks stored off-farm on March 1, 2005, at 8.49 million bushels, were up 48 percent from the 5.75 million bushels stored a year ago.

Louisiana Rice Stocks

Rough rice stocks reported in all positions on March 1, 2005, totaled 10.13 million cwt, up 22 percent from last year. On-farm stocks of rice were estimated at 4.75 million cwt, compared to 2.30 million the previous year. Off-farm stocks totaled 5.38 million cwt, down 10 percent from last year.

Louisiana and U.S. Grain Stocks, March 1, 2004-2005

Item	Louisiana ¹		United States	
	March 1		March 1	
	2004	2005	2004	2005
	-----Thousand Bushels-----		-----Thousand Bushels-----	
Corn				
On-Farm			3,030,000	4,137,000
Off-Farm ²	<u>14,518</u>	<u>16,336</u>	<u>2,241,459</u>	<u>2,616,738</u>
Total			5,271,459	6,753,738
Sorghum				
On-Farm			21,000	33,400
Off-Farm ²	<u>1,601</u>	<u>1,565</u>	<u>137,652</u>	<u>169,989</u>
Total			158,652	203,389
Soybeans				
On-Farm			355,900	795,000
Off-Farm ²	<u>3,561</u>	<u>4,231</u>	<u>549,947</u>	<u>585,974</u>
Total			905,847	1,380,974
All-Wheat				
On-Farm			257,890	304,710
Off-Farm ²	<u>5,750</u>	<u>8,493</u>	<u>762,727</u>	<u>676,304</u>
Total			1,020,617	981,014

¹ Louisiana on farm stocks and total stocks not published to avoid disclosure of individual operations

² Includes stocks at mills, elevators, warehouses, terminals, and processors

Louisiana Rice Stocks

Date	On Farms Or Farm Warehouses	In Mills And Attached Warehouses	In Warehouses Not Attached To Mills	In Ports Or In Transit	Total All Positions
	(Domestic Units – 1,000 Cwt)				
	Rough Rice				
March 1, 2004	2,300	1/	3,197	1/	8,307
August 1, 2004	1/	1/	1/	1/	998
December 1, 2004	8,500	1/	6,944	1/	17,581
March 1, 2005	4,750	940	1/	1/	10,127

¹ Included in unallocated to avoid disclosing individual operations.

United States Rice Stocks

Date	On Farms Or Farm Warehouses	In Mills And Attached Warehouses	In Warehouses Not Attached To Mills	In Ports Or In Transit	Total All Positions
	(Domestic Units – 1,000 Cwt)				
	Rough Rice				
March 1, 2004	18,325	13,755	55,150	610	87,840
August 1, 2004	571	6,085	12,819	40	19,515
December 1, 2004	57,545	15,232	92,534	1,349	166,660
March 1, 2005	37,590	12,690	67,910	566	118,756
	Milled Rice				
March 1, 2004	---	4,530	146	1,657	6,333
August 1, 2004	---	2,591	105	255	2,951
December 1, 2004	---	3,379	48	1,214	4,641
March 1, 2005	---	3,320	52	2,047	5,419

Prices Received Index Up 4 Points

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in March, at 118, based on 1990-92=100, is 4 points above the February Index. The Crop Index is up 7 points while the Livestock Index is up 3 points. Producers received higher commodity prices for cattle, soybeans, lettuce and corn. Lower prices were received for strawberries, grapefruit, apples and eggs. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell, based on the past 3-year average, also affects the overall index. Increased average marketings of strawberries, dairy, broilers and tomatoes offset decreased marketings of cattle, corn, oranges and cotton.

This preliminary All Farm Products Index is down 3 points from March 2004. The Food Commodities Index, at 122, is 4 points above last month but down 1 point from March 2004.

Prices Paid Index Unchanged

The March Index of Prices Paid for Commodities and Services, Interest, Taxes, and Farm Wage Rates was 135 percent of the 1990-92 average. The index was unchanged from February but 3 points above March 2004. Lower prices in March for complete feeds, feed supplements, nitrogen fertilizers and herbicides were offset by higher prices for feeder cattle, diesel fuel, other machinery, LP gas and gasoline.

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Average Prices Received by Farmers: Louisiana and United States

Item	Louisiana			United States		
	Entire Month		Preliminary	Entire Month		Preliminary
	March	February	March	March	February	March
	2004	2005	2005 ¹	2004	2005	2005 ¹
	----- Dollars -----			----- Dollars -----		
Soybeans, per bushel	8.41	5.59	6.30	9.28	5.42	6.28
Rice, per cwt	9.07	7.63	7.53	8.45	6.79	6.97
Upland Cotton, per pound	.613	.404	.429 ²	.616	.390	.422 ²
Hay, all, baled, per ton	n/a	n/a	n/a	81.80	84.70	89.10
Beef Cattle, per cwt ³	57.20	66.30	67.60	83.70	89.00	91.90
Steers & Heifers, per cwt	88.40	103.00	105.00	88.00	93.30	96.30
Cows, per cwt ⁴	45.10	52.00	53.00	46.50	52.40	53.60
Calves, per cwt	105.00	123.00	126.00	115.00	128.00	132.00
Broilers, live, per pound	n/a	n/a	n/a	.470	.430	.440
Eggs, all, per dozen	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.100	.551	.527
Milk, all, per cwt ⁵	n/a	n/a	n/a	15.40	15.50	15.60

¹Mid-month.

²Preliminary prices are based on sales during the first half of the month.

³“Cows” and “steers and heifers” combined.

⁴Beef cows and cull dairy cows sold for slaughter.

⁵Before deductions for hauling and government withholdings. Includes bulk tank, quantity, and other premiums. Excludes hauling subsidies.
n/a = not available.

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